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THE MORNING NEWS

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Yesterday, people participated in a sacred 12.12.12 ceremony with ancient crystal skulls at Miami Circle which is a Tequesta indian site in Miami, used centuries ago. The ceremony was held on the calendar date of 12-12-12 which is the last major numerical date using the Gregorian or Christian calendar for almost another century. (AFP PHOTO)

Future vision of the LGO of Aruba receives Dutch support

ORANJESTAD -- Last Tuesday Aruba's Prime Minister met with Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Frans Timmermans and was able to get the Dutch Minister's attention for what Aruba sees as the vision for a future LGO arrangement where the relationship between the oceanic territories and the European Union has to be formally accorded.

The actual LGO arrangement has little significance, which is the same opinion shared by the Dutch Minister. This arrangement ends on December 31, 2013 and will give us the opportunity to improve on it. The European Commission already has a proposition on the table which extends into the direction desired. Aruba is intent on achieving a strategic



partnership. This partnership should allow opportunities to determine how to make the very best use of this so as to benefit both of us.

Aruba has already submitted a written document of our vision to the Ministry of Exter-

nal Affairs. Further negotiations regarding a new LGO arrangement will be dealt with in Brussels by Minister Timmermans. The Prime Minister was pleased to indicate that the Dutch Minister will be defending Aruba's vision in Brussels.

Dutch Prime Minister to visit Aruba next year!

ORANJESTAD -- Aruba's Prime Minister, during his recent working visit to the Netherlands, paid a visit to Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte. Rutte, reportedly, is a very dynamic individual with a great deal of enthusiasm regarding the relationship between Holland and Aruba.

According to Eman, together with Rutte they have delineated the road they must



take which offers added value for both Aruba and Holland. Minister Rutte indicated that

he will be visiting Aruba next year.

Continued on page 3

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The Renaissance Mall is proud to show off its contemporary Christmas decorations, with a large fully lit Christmas tree as the focal point of attention in the Mall and a whimsical Santa's giant chest with gifts at the Marketplace.

This year's colors at the Renaissance Mall are green, red and gold with a touch of white, while the more traditional green and red is used in the Renaissance Marketplace. Santa and his huge chest filled with toys provide a perfect picture opportunity, against the backdrop of three gorgeous Christmas trees with interlaced bows and bells.

With the palm trees all lit

up with twinkling lights, and the columns wrapped in glittering garlands the malls are ready to receive visitors during extended store opening hours in December, which are 10 am to 8 pm.

Both malls already enjoyed much foot-traffic from October through the beginning of December as Island Extravaganza unfolded, and drew a record crowd last weekend when the popular promotion concluded with a mega give-away.

The Renaissance Mall boasts an extensive collection of international brands. It is home to the Cinemas with six spacious theaters and many successful and diverse eateries.

ASTEC, in cooperation with Customs and APA, prolongs service at harbor entrance

ORANJESTAD -- Traditionally, the first three weeks of December are the busiest period in terms of handling sea cargo on the island. In connection with this, ASTEC N.V., the company that performs stevedoring work of unloading and loading the ships and delivering and receiving their cargoes is extending its services. This is with the full cooperation of local Customs Services and Aruba Ports Authority (APA.) Service at the entrance of the harbor will be until six o'clock in the evening. This extra service time began on December 5.

The extra service will continue until the Christmas. As a



result, customers enjoy more flexibility with regard to handling of cargo during what is generally regarded as the "peak season" for business on our island.

It should be noted that the flow of containers is on schedule as the gantry crane and the principal crane used to unload the cargo are both fully operational.

Concert this Sunday by FDEC students and cultural friends



FDEC is celebrating its 15th anniversary and its management is very proud of the work of all these years in bringing arts and music to Aruba's districts.

FDEC operates in 6 districts, from Monday till Saturday in respectively Oranjestad, St. Cruz, Savaneta, Noord, San Nicolas and Paradera.

Students get lessons in 16 different musical instruments and also drawing classes, airbrush and arts and crafts are given. On average 700 to 800 students, young and old attend FDEC monthly.

In October the foundation started the Ensemble Arrangement entailing band practice

for 4 student bands in different genres and two student choirs.

This Sunday, December 16, at 11 am FDEC proudly presents its big band 'FDEC Caribbean Orchestra' who will give a Christmas recital accompanied by FDEC's friends, the Gang the Arte Youth - per-

forming a dramatic act - Joan Danies' actors group, Choir Youth Heart of Brazil, Dance group Nos Cultura and Gaita group Los Parranderos, who will close off the morning with end of year gaita music. Not to be missed is the inauguration of FDEC's hymn written by mr. Robert Maduro, well known in the sphere of Aruban traditional celebration music.

Tickets are available at the door starting 10 am on the day of the performance and during the week at FDEC's office in De La Sallestraat next to Club Tumazu. FDEC's goal is to open eyes and broaden minds, making our community happier and more united. Unite with FDEC this Sunday morning at 11am for a cozy show.

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Dutch PM...

Continued from page 1

Eman submitted a report of the economic-financial situation of Aruba to Rutte. This is a report that from time to time is presented to the Dutch Kingdom Council. This report describes how Aruba has grown over the past three years, how Aruba confronted our biggest challenges, how the government dealt with the challenges of our Pension Fund (SVB), and introduced the National Social Dialogue. Also mentioned in the report is how the government was able to stabilize the civil servants' pension fund, as well as the AZV.

Eman also discussed Aruba's Public Finances and the 400 million deficit. This deficit, they are reducing every year by 75 million. Reportedly, by 2013 the deficit will be reduced again and by 2014 they intend to reach the 3% international benchmark and eventually achieve a balanced budget by 2016.

Prime Minister Rutte had much praise for Aruba and its management and for the excellent relationship which exists between the two countries. Rutte also expressed enthusiasm for the planned "Europe Meets the Americas" conference.

Carnival 59 is truly inaugurated, Bacchanal 2013 is unveiled!



What began as a school project is now a beloved 15-year tradition of Aruba's Carnival, the unveiling of the official magazine of Carnival, "Bacchanal," designed and published by Friedrich "Chibi" van der Hans.

Chibi chose noon on 12/12/12, the last such date to be seen this century, to reveal the beautiful cover showcasing Aruba's Youth Carnival Queen 2012 Edelyse Nicolaas. She was joined by Aruba's Minis-

ter of Tourism, Transport and Labor, Otmar Oduber, in lifting the curtain off the memorial enlargement, and receiving the first copies of the magazine from Chibi. The informal ceremony took place at the Cas di Cultura in Oranjestad.

For more than a decade, Bacchanal has been the bible of Aruba's Carnival. It has a full schedule of all events, as well as interesting histories of their establishment and integration into carnival. Listed



are all the parades and a map of their routes, musical competitions, elections of carnival royalty and their role, explained in both Papiamentu and English. It is a attractive publication filled with photos from the preceding year's events, providing excellent insight into Aruba's most prestigious and majestic cultural tradition.

Bacchanal is distributed for free and can be found at gas stations, resorts, restaurants and other venues, but copies go quickly. Those who wish to be in the know about this

year's upcoming carnival should get their copy before they run out. This year will be a particularly short and busy season, beginning on January 5 with the famous Torch Parade in Oranjestad and ending on February 16 with the Burning of Momo at the Aruba Entertainment Center.

Minister Oduber thanked Chibi van der Hans for his exceptional year-long efforts in promoting carnival and producing a beautiful publication, which adds substantially to the enjoyment of the festivities.

Rosalie Klein

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A weekend of gourmet dining at the new Ike's Bistro end with a flourish



The Morning News Manager Ingrid Does, Asst. GM. Rita van Volleveld and Owner Ewald Biemans

Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa is very proud of their new venture, Ike's Bistro. The restaurant is named for the resort's founder, Ike Cohen, a legend on Aruba for his remarkable intuition for fine dining and uncompromising standards in the hospitality industry. Over the weekend of December 8, the resort hosted an official grand opening event.

Resort GM Edgar Roelofs informed a gathering of resort owners and managers on the final evening, Tuesday, December 11, they are particular pleased to showcase the culinary creativity of native Aruban Chef Evar de Pena, one of the star graduate of Aruba's famed EPI Culinary

Institute. Chef de Pena explained his motivation in restructuring the restaurant's theme, "Where the Mediterranean Meets the Caribbean," combining the influences of their former Italian restaurant with a fusion of regional flavor. He has been quite inventive, and patrons report they are impressed.

Special guests sampled dishes such as flaky Spanakopita and Red Pepper Hummus, paired to the fine vintages of Arion Wine Company. Delectable paella prepared by guest celebrity Chef Albert Ughetto, presented a finale flourish for the opening weekend of Ike's Bistro.



Chef Albert Ughetto



Chef Ughetto is the founder and executive chef of what is rated the finest French restaurant in Tallahassee, Florida, Albert's Provence Restaurant. Lucky diners, who had decided



GM Edgar Roelofs and Creative Chef Ever de Pena



Ingrid Does, Rita van Volleveld and Calloway Corporation Mng Dir Deborah st. Laurent

to indulge in their special introductory 4-course meal including wine pairings, received an extra special surprise with an unexpected course of his Mediterranean specialty. The four-course "Chef's Tasting Menu" consisting of Chef de Pena's fresh choices of the night and wine pairing, will continue to be a part of the regular menu, offering variety and

value.

It was a charming evening under the stars, as the restaurant is a stylish venue, where patrons can enjoy their meal around the pool deck and gardens. Reservations can be made for the grand opening of Ike's Bistro by calling 582-3444 or via e-mail: ikes-bistro@manchebo.com.

Rosalie Klein



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Argentina stunned by sex slavery trial acquittals

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Argentines took to the streets and politicians voiced outrage yesterday after a court acquitted 13 people charged with running a sex slavery ring.

Susana Trimarco, an activist who personally freed many sex slaves as she searched for her missing daughter Marita Veron, spoke with President Cristina Kirchner, who was among those angered by the verdict.

"I had a call from the president and she was shouting 'I cannot believe it. I cannot believe it'," she said.

"Even the wife of President Obama voiced her support to me. I thank her from the bottom of my heart and assured her that we are not going to stop fighting," she added, referring to the US First Lady, Michelle Obama.

In 2008, Trimarco's tireless campaign won a toughening of sentences for those convicted of sex trafficking, but she has yet to find her daughter, who went missing aged 23 in 2002.

Trimarco and fellow campaigners believe that Marita is among the victims of an alleged sex ring in Tucuman province in northern Argentina.

But on Tuesday a court in Tucuman found the suspects not guilty. The verdict triggered national outrage, and protest groups called for marches in cities around the country.

"The court system does not understand the system of people trafficking," lamented Zaida Gatti, who leads the state-run National Program to Rescue People Harmed by Trafficking Crimes.

Trimarco's attorney Jose D'Antona said he planned to seek the impeachment of the members of the court.

A disappointed Kirchner, a lawyer herself by training, said she hoped more "democratization" could be brought to Argentina's court system.

"I thought that I would find her devastated," the president said after her phone call to Trimarco. "But I found her more calm and centered than ever, and more determined to keep on fighting."

As recently as Sunday, the president had honored Trimarco, already a recipient with similar prizes in the United States and Canada, with a human rights award for her work.



Capitol Hill police check an unidentified man dressed as Santa Claus with a metal detector as he enters the U.S. Capitol on his way to Speaker of the House John Boehner's office on December 12, 2012 in Washington, DC. The man was working with the group Catholics United, and wanted to urge Speaker of the House John Boehner to pass pending "fiscal cliff" legislation before Christmas. (AFP photo)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UN Security Council condemns N. Korea rocket launch

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - The UN Security Council yesterday condemned North Korea's rogue rocket launch and warned of possible measures over the provocative act that heightened fears among foes and allies alike.

Though close ally China joined the chorus of protest, the defiant North said it could stage new launches as it described hearts in the isolated state "racing with excitement" at its success in putting a satellite into orbit.

The UN Security Council held emergency talks after the North, already under international sanctions for nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009, ignored pleas not to fire and went ahead with the rocket launch earlier yesterday.

"Members of the Security Council condemned this launch, which is a clear violation of Security Council resolutions 1718 and 1874," said a statement released after the meeting.

The council made it clear it considered the North had used proscribed "ballistic missile technology" and highlighted a warning made after a failed launch in April that it could take "action" if there was a new attempt.

"Members of the Security Council will continue consultations on an appropriate response," said the statement read to reporters by Mohammed Loulichki, Morocco's UN ambassador and council president for December.

The launch has been widely condemned and the United States said there had to be "consequences" for the breach of UN resolutions. US ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, said talks would start straight away on international action.

China, a veto-wielding member of the Security Council, did not immediately indicate whether it would allow more sanctions.

The launch shows that

"North Korea is determined to pursue its ballistic missile program without regard for its international obligations," Rice told reporters. "Therefore members of the council must now work in a concerted fashion to send North Korea a clear message that its violations of UN Security Council resolutions have consequences."

Diplomats said talks would start straight away on a resolution that could set out formal measures.

North Korea fired the rocket just days before its young ruler, Kim Jong-Un, marks 12 months in power.

North Korea insisted the mission was not a banned inter-continental missile test but carried a scientific satellite into space.

"The satellite has entered the orbit as planned," Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a statement repeated later in a triumphant special state television broadcast.

US: Syria regime using missiles, barrel bombs

AFP photo shows an image grab taken from the state-run Syrian news channel reportedly showing the destruction to the main entrance of the Syrian interior ministry in Damascus on December 12, 2012.

US official said yesterday the Syrian regime has begun using missiles and barrel bombs against the opposition in the past week or so, a top

Amid reports that Scud missiles are being used, State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said she "was not in a position to confirm types of missiles, simply to say that we're seeing missiles em-



ployed now."

She added there was also

"another egregious weapon. It's kind of a barrel bomb."

Guatemala expels McAfee to the United State

GUATEMALA CITY (AFP) - US anti-virus software pioneer John McAfee escaped immediate deportation to Belize yesterday as Guatemala decided to expel the American back to the United States instead.

"Mr McAfee will be expelled to the United States shortly," said immigration spokesman Fernando Lucer, as McAfee was being taken from his detention center to the airport by police convoy.

McAfee, who entered Guatemala illegally after more

than three weeks on the run, is wanted in Belize for questioning over his neighbor's murder last month.

His specific destination was not immediately known. Lucer said only that he would be put on a commercial flight.

The 67-year-old McAfee, who was arrested on December 5 for entering Guatemala illegally, denies murdering his neighbor and says he went on the run because he feared for his life if apprehended in Belize. His request last week for

asylum in Guatemala was denied.

Authorities in Belize want to question him about the death of 52-year-old Florida expatriate Gregory Faull, who was found by his housekeeper with a 9-mm bullet in his head, lying in a pool of his own blood.

Police in Belize said weeks ago that ballistics experts were seeking a match between bullets found in the dog carcasses and one found in the murder victim, but no results have been announced.

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International News

Chavez recovery 'complex and difficult,' VP warns

CARACAS (AFP) - President Hugo Chavez faces a "complex and difficult" recovery from cancer surgery in Cuba, Venezuela's Vice President and heir apparent Nicolas Maduro warned an anxious nation on Wednesday.

The six-hour operation Tuesday "was complex, difficult, delicate, which tells us that the post-surgery process will also be complex and difficult," Maduro, Chavez's hand-picked successor, said in a radio and TV broadcast.

The president "was very clear" that the country must be "prepared to face a tough and difficult situation" that can be overcome only if Venezuelans remain united, Maduro said.

Chavez flew to Havana for surgery on Monday after revealing that his cancer had returned just two months after his triumphant re-election to a new six-year term that begins on January 10.

The 58 year-old president was first diagnosed with the disease in June 2011. After three rounds of surgery, in addition to chemotherapy and radiation, Chavez had assured Venezuelans earlier this year that he was cancer-free.

The operation "ended correctly and successfully," Maduro, to whom Chavez delegated power before flying to Havana, had told Venezuelans late Tuesday.

There was no news on when Chavez would return to Venezuela.

Chavez supporters held religious services and candle-light vigils across the country, praying for their leader to overcome the disease.

Without formally handing

over the presidency, Chavez said he was delegating the country's "high political command" to Maduro, 50, while he was gone, and said the vice president would succeed him if he became incapacitated.

Under Venezuela's constitution, elections must be held within 30 days if the president dies or is incapacitated.

Ecuadoran President Rafael Correa, who visited Chavez on Monday, expressing concern over the "very delicate operation."

Correa, a firebrand leftist economist who could succeed Chavez as leader of the Latin American left, flew to the Venezuelan's side in Havana where he found him in "great spirits" before the operation.

Correa said he had also visited Cuban President Raul Castro and his predecessor Fidel Castro during his day-long stay in the Cuban capital.

With Cuba's backing, Chavez has taken the lead in forming a bloc of leftist Latin American governments that oppose US policies in the region, and has cultivated friendly relations with Washington adversaries like Iran.

Members of the group include Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador and Nicaragua -- all of which receive substantial aid from oil-rich Venezuela.

Chavez is believed to be receiving treatment at the same Havana hospital where Fidel Castro has been cared for, the communist country's best facility for complicated medical conditions.

Chavez's cancer operation came against the backdrop of frantic campaigning for regional elections set for Sunday.

Facebook removes Taliban recruitment page

SAN FRANCISCO (AFP) - Facebook has taken down a page used by the Islamist guerrillas of the Pakistani Taliban to recruit new fighters, a spokesman for the US-based social network site told AFP on Wednesday.

Earlier, the US-based SITE Intelligence Group said the Umar Media TTP page used Facebook as "a recruitment" tool.

This month, 270 users clicked a link to say they "like" the page. The account appeared to have been created in September and has just a handful of messages, written in English.

"At Facebook, we have rules that bar direct statements of hate, attacks on private individuals and groups, and the promotion of terrorism," a Facebook statement said.

"We have a large team of professional investigators both in the US and abroad who enforce these rules. Where abusive content is posted and reported, Facebook removes it and disables accounts of those responsible."

In Pakistan, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) spokesman Ehsanullah Ehsan told AFP this month that the faction was "temporarily" using the page "to fulfill its requirements" before launching

its own website.

The TTP mainly operates in Pakistan's tribal areas along the porous border with Afghanistan, where it has links with the better-known Afghan Taliban, and during a five-year insurgency has carried out many attacks inside Pakistan.

Last month, the TTP claimed responsibility for planting a bomb under the car of a prominent Pakistani journalist and TV anchorman, Hamid Mir.

In October, members of the group shot and wounded 15-year-old schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai in a failed bid to silence her campaign for girls' education.

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TE: 586 4046**Health & Living****Beneath the burqa: Afghan women opt for cosmetic surgery**

KABUL (AFP) - Despite living much of their lives behind a veil, some Afghan women are feeling pressure to conform to ideals of female beauty and are lining up for cosmetic surgery at a handful of clinics in Kabul.

A few years ago, most operations would have been to repair war wounds or scars from family violence, acid attacks or attempts at self-immolation by women driven to despair by hard times in a male-dominated society.

Now, nose jobs are most popular, but facelifts, breast enhancement and tummy tucks are also sought after.

"When I sometimes ask the young people who come here why they want cosmetic operations, they simply say they want to look better and beautiful," Dr Aminullah Hamkar, 53, who runs a Kabul clinic said to AFP.

This was a good sign, he said, showing that people, at least in the capital, were moving beyond the violence of a hardline Islamist Taliban insurgency and contemplating ideas usually reserved for times of peace.

Like Shaïda who is from the minority Hazara ethnic group, many of whom have slightly Mongolian looks, with almond eyes and noses that are flatter than those of other Afghans.

Shaïda, who works as a policewoman, sought cosmetic surgery after seeing some of her friends and colleagues change the shapes of their noses and eyes.

"Now that I have a bigger nose, I feel more comfortable and satisfied," she said smiling.

The two surgeons at the clinic perform about two cosmetic procedures each week, apart from their regular plastic

surgery for medical or reconstructive purposes.

Most cosmetic operations are done under local anesthetic to cut costs. And for nose enlargement, instead of using silicon, the surgeons cut cartilage from a rib, carve it to the right shape and use that.

A typical nose enlargement costs about \$300, more than a month's salary for many Afghans, but since the ousting of the Taliban regime 11 years ago, the influx of billions of dollars in aid has led to the emergence of a growing middle class.

They have been exposed to trends in Iran, Dubai and European countries, and are willing to pay for plastic surgery purely for cosmetic reasons.

Hamkar tells the story of an 18-year-old woman whose husband complained on his return from working in Dubai that her breasts were sagging and not up to the standards he had seen abroad and he didn't want her any more.

The girl, from a conservative and insurgency-plagued province in eastern Afghanistan, had married, had children early and had breast-fed them.

"Now for me, who has worked as a plastic surgeon for years, seeing such cases in other countries was nothing new, but this was something new here in Afghanistan," the doctor said.

"Her husband travels to a liberal, more open city like Dubai, probably sees beautiful and in-shape women and upon his return home he dislikes his wife's shape and even approves her visiting a plastic surgeon.

"Many people's perceptions of life and sex change upon their return from a trip to a less conservative place."

UN launches major cholera appeal for Haiti

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) - The United Nations on Tuesday launched a \$2.2 billion appeal for a campaign to halt a cholera epidemic in Haiti, widely blamed on UN peacekeepers, which has killed more than 7,750 people.

With the number of reported cases exceeding 620,000 since the epidemic started in October 2010, UN leader Ban Ki-moon acknowledged the "heavy toll" as he launched the 10-year initiative.

Several hundred people have also been killed in neighboring Dominican Republic.

Ban did not mention the cause of the epidemic, allegedly a camp of Nepalese peacekeepers in the town of Mirebalais, as he called for huge international financing to counter the bacterial disease.

UN officials said 70 percent of the \$2.2 billion needed in the next decade would be used to build water and sanitation facilities. Ban said the UN would also buy quantities of a new oral vaccine.

Ban said the United Nations has already spent \$118 million dollars on its cholera response and that he would campaign to raise more money.

While a UN investigation found there was no way of knowing what caused the epidemic, a growing number of experts, including some from

the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, have said the cholera strain in Haiti matched the prevalent strain in Nepal.

Ban acknowledged that the epidemic has "added a heavy rate of suffering on a country already recovering from the largest natural disaster in the history of the western hemisphere."

"The United Nations has a long history in Haiti, many years of partnership in difficult times," Ban said. "Today as ever we are in Haiti for one reason alone: to help the Haitian people make their great country all that it can be."

Haitian Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe backed the UN campaign to "put an end to this terrible disease" and also did not mention the cause.

In addition to water and sanitation facilities, the government wanted to build new community centers and employ thousands of health workers, he said.

Nigel Fisher, UN humanitarian representative in Haiti, said there has been a dramatic fall in the spread of the epidemic, as the number of new cases dropped to 117,000 this year, with 850 deaths.

Fisher also refused to comment on the cause of the epidemic, saying it was in the hands of UN lawyers.

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Sci-Tech

Pope blesses Internet flock with first Twitter message

VATICAN CITY (AFP) - Pope Benedict XVI blessed his new Internet flock on Wednesday with his first Twitter message to the hundreds of thousands of followers already signed up to receive the holy tweets.

"Dear friends, I am pleased to get in touch with you through Twitter. Thank you for your generous response. I bless all of you from my heart," read the tweet, which the 85-year-old pope sent from a tablet at the end of his weekly general audience.

Since the pope last week announced that he would start tweeting under his official Latin title @pontifex, more than 650,000 people have registered to follow his main account in English.

Tens of thousands more are following his Arabic, French, German, Italian, Polish, Por-



tuguese and Spanish accounts.

The Vatican has invited the pope's new Twitter fans to ask questions that the pontiff will try to answer in 140 characters or less.

The first tweet marks a milestone in Vatican communication efforts as it tries to disseminate the Catholic message worldwide -- especially to younger people.

"The pope's presence on Twitter is a concrete expression of his conviction that the Church must be present in the digital arena," the Vatican said earlier.

"The pope is not going to be walking around with a BlackBerry or an iPad and no one is going to be putting words into the pope's mouth. He will tweet what he wants to tweet."

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Social networks grow in global political debate

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Social media like Facebook and Twitter have become important elements in political and social discourse in a number of countries, particularly in the Arab world, a survey showed Wednesday.

A 21-nation survey found wide use of social networks across the globe, and that many people, especially in Arab countries, are using these networks to express social and political views.

Among social network participants in Lebanon, for example, 68 percent said they shared views on politics and 81 percent on community issues. Similarly high levels were found in Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan.

The survey noted that social networking "has spread around the world with remarkable speed" in both advanced and developing countries.

It found that younger people were leading the way in the use of social networks, and that smartphones were being used widely to connect.

"Globally, most smartphone users say they visit social networking sites on their phone, while many get job, consumer, and political information," Pew said.

"Technologies like these are especially popular among the

young and well educated. In almost every country polled, people under age 30 and those with a college education are more likely to engage in social networking and to use a smartphone."

Roughly half of the people surveyed in the United States, Britain, Russia, Spain and the Czech Republic said they used social networks, as did around four in 10 in Poland, Brazil, France and Italy.

In most of the other nations surveyed, around one-third said they used social networks, but the figure was just six percent in India and three percent in Pakistan.

"There is considerable interest in social networking in low- and middle-income nations," said the report.

"Once people in these countries are online, they generally become involved in social networks at high rates. For instance, the vast majority of Internet users in Mexico, Brazil, Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, Russia and India are using social networking sites."

In all countries, those in the 18-29 age group were the heaviest users of social networks, with more than 90 percent participating in several countries. Those in the 30-49 age category were generally more active than their peers over 50.

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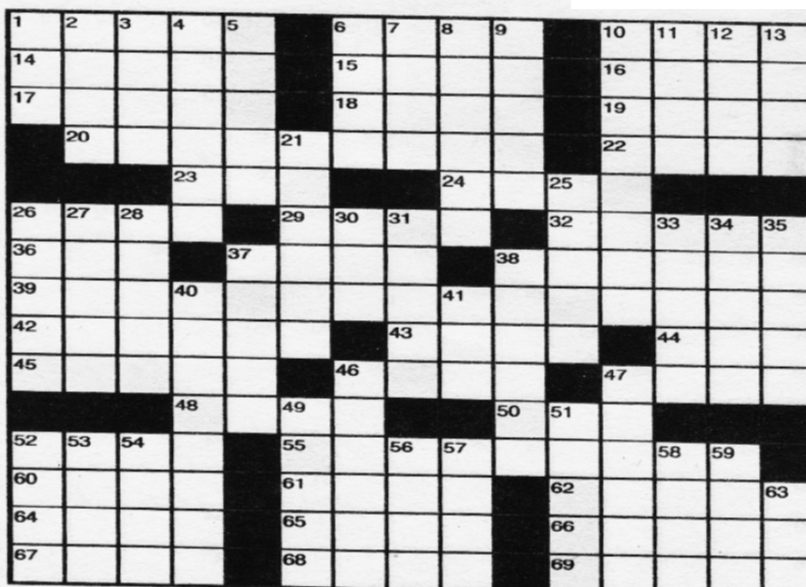
GOING TO THE DOGS

ACROSS

1. Songwriters' org.
6. Flutter
10. Theater box
14. Go
15. Unwritten exam
16. Poet exiled by Augustus
17. Blanches
18. Ancient inscription
19. Winston Cup winner
20. Heroic movie pooch
22. Spirit
23. Armed force inits.
24. Children
26. Caesar's farewell
29. Deuce beater
32. Water-loving animal
36. Dr. J's original league: abbr.
37. Rod's adjunct
38. Horses' home
39. 1955 Disney film
42. Staten or Ellis
43. Like an anointer's hands
44. Anonymous party to a suit
45. Steel plow pioneer
46. Dagger, of old
47. Org.
48. Pupil's place
50. Nothing
52. Fountain drink
55. Comic strip
56. Great Dane
60. Cupid
61. Fits to
62. Exudes

DOWN

1. Mountain for Heidi
2. Broil
3. Colombian cartel city
4. Address word
5. Annoying insects
6. Frayed
7. In (stagnant)
8. Amour-propre
9. "Paradise" novelist
10. Castedo
11. Like a racetrack
12. "Monster" of Mexico
13. Genesis eviction locale
21. Mean
25. Wacky
26. Having a stamp of approval
27. Insult
28. Punch spoon
30. Flushed
31. "Daniel" singer
33. Ski lifts
34. "St. Fire"
35. Cage again
37. Bombay queen
38. Goddess of the moon
40. Square sail supports
41. Make haste
46. Stephen Carriere, for one
47. Bill and Hillary, vis-à-vis Yale
49. Tony
51. "My (1930 song)"
52. Responsibility
53. Forewarning
54. Put cargo on board
56. Former French president
57. Coty
58. "The Shining" author
59. Arctic exploratory base
63. Extra-fast jet



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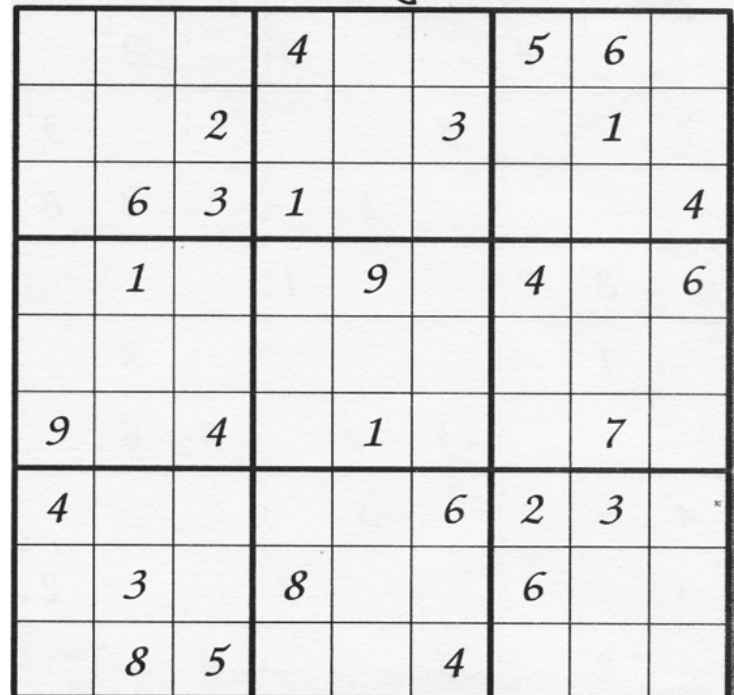
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Sudoku



SOLUTION

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S	P	9	I	L	8	6	E	Z
8	E	Z	9	S	6	I	L	P
Z	L	E	8	I	9	P	S	6
1	8	6	S	P	L	9	Z	E
9	S	P	Z	6	E	L	I	8
P	Z	L	6	8	I	E	9	S
6	I	8	E	9	S	Z	P	L
E	9	S	L	Z	P	8	6	I

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

Finance



Current as of:
12/12/2012

	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	1.80
Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79	100.20
Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	1.83
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	2.92
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	193.16
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	234.58
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	27.45
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	31.69
Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84	32.25
(per 10,000)				216.97

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EU parliament approves long-delayed 2013 budget

STRASBOURG, France (AFP) - The European Parliament approved on Wednesday a long-delayed EU 2013 budget but including conditions that member states make up shortfalls in the current year's spending programme.

Parliament head Martin Schulz said the European Commission, the bloc's executive arm, will present a budget adjustment early next year which will provide funds to cover the 2012 shortfall.

For 2012, the adjustment will provide about six billion euros -- out of the nine billion euros missing -- to cover several commitments, including the Erasmus student exchange

programme, and MEPs approved this provision by a large majority.

Member states cut the 2013 budget by five billion euros to some 133 billion euros over the opposition of the Commission and Parliament which backed a 6.8-percent increase -- or nine billion euros -- to 138 billion euros so as to help bolster growth and jobs in the slowing economy.

Separate talks on the EU's 2014-20 budget, under which the Commission targeted a 5.0 percent increase to some 1.0 trillion euros (\$1.3 trillion), failed last month as Britain led opposition to any additional spending at a time of austerity.

Argentina to pay back \$3.5 bn in debt this week

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Argentina this week will pay back \$3.5 billion in debt stemming from a bond issued as a result of a debt restructuring, President Cristina Kirchner said.

She made the announcement of Friday's payment of debt related to restructurings carried out in 2005 and 2010 as she inaugurated an industrial facility on the outskirts of Buenos Aires.

Last week, a New York appeals court dismissed a motion by hedge funds to force Argentina to make a security deposit as Buenos Aires sought to overturn an order that it repay \$1.3 billion to holders of defaulted bonds.

The Second Circuit Court of Appeals had earlier granted Buenos Aires' request to put a hold on a November 21 lower court ruling that Argentina make good on bonds held by US hedge funds within weeks or fall in default on all its debt.

THURSDAY'S Crossword Answer



'Serious differences' in US fiscal stand-off

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The United States economy was cruising towards the disaster of the looming "fiscal cliff" on Wednesday as President Barack Obama's Republican opponents warned a budget deal was still far off.

The newly re-elected White House chief is locked in a stand-off with lawmakers over a budget deal that would prevent the onset of a toxic package of tax hikes and deep spending cuts kicking in at the end of the year.

Boehner acknowledged that Obama lowered his opening gambit of \$1.6 trillion in new tax revenue over 10 years to \$1.4 trillion, but said the White House was not putting forward enough spending cuts to make the deal palatable.

"The longer the White House slow-walks this discussion, the closer our economy gets to the fiscal cliff, and the more American jobs are placed in jeopardy," he warned.

While the White House's lower tax revenue offer is now public, Boehner's office declined to provide any new details on the Republican counter-offer.

Republican House Majority Leader Eric Cantor

warned lawmakers to expect a shortened end-of-year holiday that could see them huddled in Washington between Christmas and New Year in order to pass fiscal legislation.

The White House and Republicans are up against the clock when it comes to averting a crisis that economists say could tip the US economy back into recession.

If no deal is agreed before the end of the year, taxes will go up on all Americans and automatic and savage cuts to government spending will begin.

Obama has demanded that Republicans agree to raise taxes on the rich as part of any deal, while Boehner has offered more revenue, but only by closing loopholes and capping deductions -- a plan the president says falls short.

After recent signs that the differences might be narrowing, with a face-to-face meeting Sunday and two Obama-Boehner phone calls this week, the speaker said the two sides remain far apart.

Democrats say Republicans must step forward with a clearer outline of the spending cuts they would like to see.

"Spending cuts are their suggestion -- put them on the table," senior House Democrat Steny Hoyer said Tuesday. "We're not going to fill in the details of their proposal."

It is increasingly unlikely that a grand bargain addressing tax revenue, spending cuts, a deal on raising the debt ceiling, as well as reform of the tax code and the country's entitlement programs can be completed by year end.

While Republicans want cuts to entitlements as part of a fiscal deal, top House Democrat Nancy Pelosi said Wednesday that Obama has already agreed to more than \$1 trillion in cuts to Medicare and other health care spending.

Such savings should be considered a "down payment" for broader negotiations next year, she said.

"Let's do something significant now and then in the next stage we can address further entitlement reform as well as reform of the tax code," Pelosi told CBS News.

Meanwhile US Federal Reserve chief Ben Bernanke also called on politicians Wednesday to compromise on a deficit deal to avoid the looming fiscal cliff.

Disco queen Donna Summer to join rock Hall of Fame



LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Disco queen Donna Summer, who died in May, is to join the US Rock and Roll Hall of Fame along with Canadian rockers Rush and hip-hop pioneers Public Enemy, it was announced Tuesday.

Veteran female rockers Heart, blues legend Albert King and singer-songwriter Randy Newman will also join the music pantheon, while producers Lou Adler and Quincy Jones will receive the Ahmet Ertegun Award, given to non-performers.

Grammy-winning disco diva Summer, who topped the charts repeatedly in the 1970s and '80s with raunchy hits like "Love to Love You Baby" and "Hot Stuff," died of lung cancer in May, aged 63.

Progressive rock group Rush, formed in Toronto in 1968 and known for classic albums including "2112" from 1976 and 1981's "Moving Pictures," were already inducted into Canada's

Music Hall of Fame in 1994.

Hip hop veterans Public Enemy, known for politically-charged lyrics, were formed in New York in 1982 and were named among the 100 Greatest Artists of All Time by Rolling Stone magazine in 2004.

Heart, led by sisters Ann and Nancy Wilson, have been together for four decades, hit the big time with their debut 1976 album "Dreamboat Annie." The band returned to the Billboard Top 10 with 2010's "Red Velvet Car."

Sixty-nine year-old Newman's career ranges from pop ballads to Oscar-winning songs for movies including "Toy Story 3," while blues guitarist King, who died in 1992, was a major influence on generations of musicians.

The stars will be inducted into the Cleveland, Ohio-based Hall of Fame in Los Angeles on April 18 next year, the first time the ceremony has been held on the West Coast since 1993.

In Norway, boy celebrates 12th birthday on 12/12/12 at 12:12



OSLO (AFP) - By the magic of numbers a Norwegian boy celebrated a very special occasion on Wednesday, feting his 12th birthday on December 12, 2012 -- 12/12/12 -- at 12:12 pm, a newspaper reported. Joergen Svendsen Killi was born on December 12, 2000 at 12:12 pm, according to his birth certificate, a picture of which was published on the site of tabloid Verdens Gang, promising him an unforgettable birthday 12 years later. After Wednesday, the next time the same digits will appear in the date, month and year in the same order will be in more than 88 years, on January 1, 2101, or 01/01/01.

Spend a fun evening with friends at Barney's



A place where you feel like you are with friends

A few months ago, Palm Beach welcomed a cozy new place that offers good food, great prices and a uniquely warm, welcoming ambiance that makes patrons feel as if they are visiting with friends rather than just eating out. Even the name, "Barney's", which was inspired by Barney Rubble of the Flintstones, is an expression of the good humor of its owners and your hosts, Ron and Elina.

Ron and Elina have a very congenial division of labor; he enjoys being bartender and playing around with his "cocktail of the day" while she sees to it that everyone is well satisfied with their meal. Chef Jan is in the kitchen doing his magic; patrons praise their spicy Firecracker Shrimp appetizer and mush-



Mojito anyone?

Own Barney Burger" using specially imported organic beef from Holland, guaranteed to have been raised without steroids or antibiotics, only \$9.50 with fries and coleslaw. Patrons are handed a special hamburger checklist, which features a full menu of toppings, sauces and cheeses to customize your order to create the ideal burger. One can also opt for a second or third hamburger patty for a very nominal cost.

High end items on the menu, such as the Seafood Pasta, are only \$20.50. They also have a kid's menu with favorites such as a Kid's Burger, chicken fingers and Mac & Cheese; most items are only \$4. One regular described the place as particu-

larly "kid-friendly," with Elina, a mother herself, having devised a number of methods to keep young ones entertained. The menu has a range to please patrons who are in the mood for something simple while other can be indulgent gourmands.

Tuesday through Saturday evenings they have specialty nights at bargain rates. Tuesday is Schnitzel Night, with a choice of chicken or pork schnitzel prepared any of five ways, a platter with salad and side dish is \$17.50. Wednesday is "All you can eat grouper, prepared any of five ways, with veggies and side dish, \$19.50. Thursday they do it again with unlimited ribs done three ways for \$17.50 with salad, slaw and fries, Saturday means endless rib eye steak with salad and fries for \$19.50. Friday evening ends the work week with Karaoke Night, a convivial and fun evening when islanders kick back and let loose their inner rock star.

Barney's is located just next to the huge supermarket on the Palm Beach/Noord road, not far from the gas station. They are open from 5:00 to 11:00 PM and closed on Mondays. Check out their full menu at <http://www.barneysaruba.com> or call 586-5420 for reservations and directions.



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Cas Animal Cont'd

A happy holiday time story



One happy family



Toni, a Dalmatian Pitbull mix

Among the many sad stories we can tell of stray and abandoned dogs and cats, THE MORNING NEWS is happy to report another success from Foundation Cas Animal. Kirsten Arndt, who founded it with the goal of building

Aruba's first no-kill shelter, dedicates her life to rescuing dogs off the streets, ideally to see them adopted into loving homes.

This week she had a heartwarming story of the second Tony to be adopted this month. Kiki had taken in this ram-bunctious Dalmatian/Pitbull mix, Tony, when the owner told her they could not handle him anymore, and were going to put him down. After many inquiries she found a family in Montana which were just getting over their own canine grief. Their beloved American Bulldog, Deidy, had given birth to a litter of 13 puppies, and they lost all but one to Parvo. They were heartbroken, and willingly took in Tony,

who has found his soul mate in Deidy and an adopted son in the remaining puppy, Spotty.

"You should have seen them when I brought Tony to their house," recalls Kiki, "he and Deidy just couldn't wait to start playing together. She was trying to dig under the fence and he nearly broke out of his cage. It is great to see when you find such a perfect fit." The family loves their new dog, and are thrilled to see their Deidy and Spotty so happy with their new companion.

Kiki's ultimate goal is to connect dogs that need good homes placed with loving families, but it isn't always this easy. Many dogs she rescues are badly injured, and once recuperated, are not pretty, or have lost a limb. She now cares for nearly 70 dogs in her home, which she has converted into a temporary shelter, always with the hope of one of them being adopted, but knowing many will not. In this she performs a singular service for Aruba, taking in dogs that no one else will. Her costs for feeding, treating and neutering all the dogs she rescues and maintains are astronomical. She is close to breaking ground on a proper no-kill shelter in Kibaima. If anyone wishes to help, they can support her with donations in the form of payment to the Cas Animal Foundation account at the Contreras Veterinary Clinics or to Animal Care



Deidy and her baby Spotty

Clinic in Paradera, phone number 582-8382. Donations can be made directly to the foundation's account: **Cas Animal Foundation, CMB Bank account # 25762110**. If you are not an island resident and wish to adopt a dog, or see one in

distress, call Kiki at 742-8732 and she will help you as she helped Toni and Heike and many others in arranging care and transport of a dog in need of a good home.

by Rosalie Klein



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SPORTS

Football: Storm clouds gather after Arsenal 'humiliation'



LONDON (AFP) - Arsenal's League Cup loss to fourth-tier Bradford City was one of the lowest moments of Arsene Wenger's tenure and leaves the club scrapping to avoid an eighth straight season without a trophy.

In the aftermath of Tuesday's penalty shoot-out loss at a wintry Valley Parade, Wenger was typically bullish, congratulating Bradford on their achievement and insisting he could not fault his players.

That the upset occurred in the League Cup, and not the prestigious FA Cup, took some of the edge off of Arsenal's disappointment, but the British press were unanimously scathing in their verdict.

"Humiliating" was the adjective universally applied to the result on the back pages, while The Times claimed Wenger was "walking on thin ice" after the latest setback in what has already been an extremely trying season.

Wenger's decision to field a strong line-up only increased the embarrassment.

The Arsenal manager has habitually used the League Cup to blood young-team

graduates but he made just three changes to the side that beat West Bromwich Albion 2-0 on Saturday, only for his senior players to let him down.

The Bradford humiliation caps a miserable year for Arsenal, who lost top scorer Robin van Persie to Manchester United in the summer and have fallen as low as 10th in the Premier League this season.

Wenger told shareholders at October's stormy AGM that there are "five trophies" for Arsenal to aim for -- the Premier League, the Champions League, the FA Cup, the League Cup, and Champions League qualification.

Already out of the League Cup and 15 points behind United in the league, Arsenal do not seem sufficiently well-equipped to challenge for the Champions League either and once again face a battle to secure a top-four finish.

Hopes of success in the FA Cup, meanwhile, rest on whether or not they can come through their third-round tie at Swansea City next month, having already lost at home to the Welsh side earlier this month.

World short course championships



ISTAMBUL (AFP) : (From-L) Allison Schmitt, Shannon Vreeland, Megan Romano and Chelsea Chenault of USA pose with their Gold medals on the podium after winning the Women's 4x200m Freestyle Final during day one of the 11th FINA Short Course World Championships at the Sinan Erdem Dome on December 12, 2012 in Istanbul.

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Messi hits brace

MADRID (AFP) - Lionel Messi extended his record for goals scored in a year on Wednesday as the Argentinian maestro scored both Barcelona's goals in their 2-0 win away at Cordoba in their Spanish Cup Last 16 first leg clash.

The brace took him to 88 for the year, three more than German legend Gerd Mueller, although earlier on Wednesday Brazilian side Flamengo suddenly piped up to claim that Zico should be the holder with 89 goals in 1979.

While Messi can do no wrong, his compatriot Marcelo Bielsa can do little right as his Athletic Bilbao side exited the competition at the hands of third division Eibar in their delayed last 32 second-leg match.

Bilbao went out on the away goals rule as last season's finalists were held 1-1 at home by their modest opposition.

It is a far cry from last season when Bielsa - a former Argentina national coach who guided the Argentinians to the 2004 Olympic title - received great praise for the stylish football his young side played and which saw them also reach the Europa League final.

Eibar's reward is a last 16 clash with Malaga with the first leg next Wednesday.

Lochte strikes double gold



ISTAMBUL (AFP) : Ryan Lochte (C) of US, Conor Dwyer (L) of US and Paul Biedermann (R) celebrate with their medals after winning the Men 200m freestyle final. Ryan Lochte bagged two golds on the opening day of the world shortcourse championships on Wednesday to add to the five medals he won in the London Olympics in the summer. The American first led from start to finish to win the men's 200m freestyle before he teamed up with Anthony Ervin, James Feigen and Matthew Grevers to win the 4x100m freestyle relay. Lochte was pushed hard by Germany's world record holder Paul Biedermann in the 200m freestyle, but he clocked 1min 41.92sec to claim his 15th career world short course championships gold medal. The second gold was secured in a much tougher contest and needed anchor leg swimmer Grevers to chase down and overtake Russia's Artem Lobuzov and then hold off the late charge of Italy's Filippo Magnini to secure Lochte's 16th gold medal in the championships history.

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Edmundo Josiah earns Master Executive diploma in Sports

--Within the context of capacity building programs for sports leaders in the Olympics, there is the so-called MEMOS Program in which a Master Executive in Sports organization is offered. This course is the highest level course which the International Olympic Committee offers in conjunction with the University of Lleida, Spain and the INEFC of Barcelona.

Several years ago, Edmundo Josiah, psychologist and Technical Director of the



Aruba Olympic Committee, was selected by Solidaridad Olimpico to take this special course. Josiah was sent to Mexico, Guatemala, Barcelona and Madrid where he followed the courses. On November 30th, at the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne, Switzerland Josiah defended his paper, titled, "Level of the successful development of sports in Aruba," at the tribunal.

In his presentation Josiah emphasized the results of a 4-year investigation where he analyzed the financial, insti-

tutional, technical, geographic and psycho-social factors which directly influence the development of high level sports on Aruba.

Obviously, his presentation and its defense was well accepted and approved by the tribunal which then earned Josiah the diploma of Master Executive in Sports. The diploma was presented by the General Director of INEFC of Barcelona, Dr. Agusti Boixeda.

The COA in Aruba proudly recognizes this milestone in Josiah's career and wishes him much success.

Athletics: 'Blade Runner' wins as Maserati lacks horsepower



DOHA (AFP) - South African Oscar Pistorius, who became the first disabled runner to compete in the Olympics when he ran in the 400 metres, beat Arab horse Maserati in the 'run like the wind' race.

The 26-year-old Pistorius, known as the Blade Runner because of the carbon fibre blades he runs on after having his legs amputated below the knee before he was aged one because of a congenital condition, beat the horse over 200 metres.

Pistorius took up the challenge in a bid to promote disabled sportspeople and fight discrimination against disabled people in the region.

The South African, who retained his 400m title at the Paralympics in London following his Olympics campaign, raced on a typical athletics track surface while Maserati competed on a sand surface.

Pistorius, who reached the 400m semi-finals in London and also ran in the 4x400m

relay final to realise his boyhood dream of competing at the able-bodied Games, took full advantage of starting 15 metres in front of Maserati, who ruined its chances of winning by making a terrible start.

Maserati veered towards the rail which separated the two competitors and never recovered despite coming under a severe whipping from his rider and Pistorius came home well clear.

British runner Huw Lobb made a little bit of history in 2004 when he triumphed in a man against horse race in the Welsh village of Llanwrtyd Wells, raced over 22 miles (35km) and first run in 1980.

Cyclists too have challenged horses, top French rider Thomas Voeckler having taken them on in the last two summers at a racecourse in the Vendee although that is nothing compared to South African rugby star Bryan Habana, who fell short of beating a leopard.

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Football: Corinthians through to Club World Cup final

TOYOTA (AFP) - Brazilian giants Corinthians overcame Egypt's Al Ahly 1-0 in the last four of the Club World Cup in Japan on Wednesday to set up a likely final against European champions Chelsea.

A solitary goal from centre-forward Paolo Guerrero was enough to see the Copa Libertadores winners progress, but it was nowhere near a convincing performance.

Much had been expected from the South American champions, including Chelsea transfer target Paulinho, and the Brazilians dominated possession in the first half with Al Ahly happy to let their opponents knock the ball around.

However, they were unable to turn possession into chances and goal-scoring opportunities were few and far between during the opening period.

The South American champions will probably face Chelsea in Sunday's final in Yokohama, though the English Premier League club first need to dispose of Mexican side Monterrey in the other semi-final on today.

Earlier at Toyota Stadium Wednesday, J-League winners Sanfrecce Hiroshima beat the AFC Champions League holders Ulsan Hyundai 3-2 to secure fifth place at the intercontinental showpiece.

The Japanese champions went 1-0 down, but bounced back to take a 3-1 lead, thanks to two goals from forward Hisato Sato, before conceding a late consolation goal.

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Doping: Thorpe "happy" at Armstrong's downfall

DOHA (AFP) - Former Olympic swimming champion Ian Thorpe said on Wednesday he was "happy" at Lance Armstrong's downfall and congratulated the doping authorities that exposed the seven-time Tour de France winner as a drug cheat.

"I was happy. It shows that no matter who you are and whatever you do, you can fall," Thorpe said on the closing day of the Doha Goals sporting forum.

The Australian legend paid tribute to the US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) and its

president Travis Tygart who was at the heart of revealing Armstrong's systematic doping that helped him become the biggest name in the sport.

Armstrong was stripped of his seven Tour de France titles and banned from the sport for life in October after the USADA produced evidence of widespread doping by him and his former team-mates.

Tygart, also attending the conference in Doha, said: "The culture that reigns in the United States and elsewhere is one of the reasons that lead to doping."

"We have also uncovered doping in roller skating, a non-Olympic discipline that has been carrying out very sophisticated doping programmes that we have never seen before and was carried out by the fathers and coaches," he continued.

"The fight against doping is at the centre of our debates here in Doha."

Thorpe, once suspected of taking banned substances before being cleared, added: "It's right that we talk about the possibility of seeing changes

introduced to our society across the world of sport. To see doping means that we have not yet managed to protect our people," said Thorpe.

The 2000 Olympic triple jump champion and world record holder Jonathan Edwards is also in attendance in Doha and offered his viewpoints on the subject.

"When people watch a competition, we do not know if it is fair and there is a great question over the credibility of the event. People need to believe in the athletes," added the double world champion.